 National Transportation Safety Board <b>FACTUAL REPORT</b> <b>AVIATION</b>		NTSB ID: SEA05MA199		Aircraft Registration Number: N355NT	
		Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005		Most Critical Injury: Fatal	
		Occurrence Type: Accident		Investigated By: NTSB	
Location/Time					
Nearest City/Place Haena	State HI	Zip Code 96722	Local Time 1415	Time Zone HST	
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip		Distance From Landing Facility:			
Aircraft Information Summary					
Aircraft Manufacturer AEROSPATIALE		Model/Series AS350BA		Type of Aircraft Helicopter	
Revenue Sightseeing Flight: Yes			Air Medical Transport Flight: No		
Narrative					
<p>Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:</p> <p>On September 23, 2005, about 1415 Hawaiian standard time, an Aerospatiale AS350BA helicopter, N355NT, registered to Jan Leasing, LLC, and operated by Heli-USA Airways, Inc., of Las Vegas, Nevada, encountered adverse weather and crashed into the Pacific Ocean several hundred feet off the coast of Kailiu Point, near Haena, Hawaii, on the island of Kauai. The sightseeing air tour flight was operated under the provisions of 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 135 and visual flight rules with a company flight plan in effect. Localized instrument meteorological conditions prevailed in the vicinity of the accident site. Three passengers were killed, and the commercial pilot and two other passengers received minor injuries. The flight departed from Lihue Airport (LIH), Lihue, Hawaii, on the island of Kauai, at 1354 for the intended 45-minute tour.</p> <p>The flight was operated under Special Federal Aviation Regulation 71, "Special Operating Rules for Air Tour Operators in the State of Hawaii," and in accordance with a certificate of waiver or authorization approved for Heli-USA by the Federal Aviation Administration Honolulu Flight Standards District Office in Honolulu, Hawaii. The flight proceeded westbound from LIH, which is on the southeastern part of the island, on the operator's standard clockwise tour route around the island.</p> <p>The pilot reported that the weather and visibility were good during the initial part of the tour. The pilot stated that he flew the helicopter over the Na Pali Coast on the northern part of the island at 2,000 feet above ground level and that the weather along the coastline was clear and without rain. The pilot stated that he saw rain showers offshore as the flight approached Kee Beach and Kailiu Point on the northern part of the island.</p> <p>The pilot reported that, as the flight came around Kailiu Point, he "suddenly saw [an MD?500 helicopter] coming straight for [his helicopter]" and that he made a left turn to avoid it. He stated that, when he leveled his helicopter out of the turn, it was "already inside the storm," and it encountered heavy rain. Two passengers reported that they saw another helicopter flying in the opposite direction but that it was far below them, and one passenger stated that it was far enough below them that she thought it was a bird. Both of these passengers said that their helicopter made no evasive maneuver, or any maneuver, before entering what they described as "a wall of pure rain and thick clouds."</p> <p>The pilot stated that, while the helicopter was in the heavy rain, he could still see down and to the right to the coastline and that he reduced the helicopter's airspeed and initiated a descent to maintain visual reference to the beach. One passenger reported that he could not see anything in the heavy rain and that he was about to say something about this to the pilot when the pilot announced that they were turning back. The pilot said that he started a right turn over the beach and that, during the turn, the helicopter's airspeed dropped to zero and the helicopter started to rapidly descend.</p>					
<div>FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION</div> <div>Page 1</div>					

National Transportation Safety Board

**FACTUAL REPORT****AVIATION**

NTSB ID: SEA05MA199

Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005

Occurrence Type: Accident

**Narrative** (Continued)


The pilot said that his control inputs were not effective and that he realized that the helicopter was going to hit the beach at a high rate of descent. The pilot stated that he applied full power and that the helicopter's rate of descent suddenly stopped. He stated that the helicopter went back up in the air momentarily and entered an immediate hard spin to the left, which took the flight over the water.


The pilot stated that he instructed the passengers to open the doors to get ready for the water impact and that the helicopter hit the water, bounced back into the air, and continued to spin. The pilot said that he transmitted a mayday call on the radio and that the helicopter impacted the water again and remained on the surface spinning. The pilot stated that the helicopter was submerged to the belly panel when it stopped spinning, then it rolled to the right and immediately began to sink.


A pilot flying a tour for another operator said that he heard the mayday call over the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) and twice attempted to fly his helicopter in the Kee Beach area to try to locate the downed helicopter but was unable to do so because of poor visibility. While returning to the airport to alert rescue authorities, he saw another Heli-USA helicopter in flight and used the CTAF to inform that pilot of the mayday call. That Heli-USA pilot then conducted a brief search and spotted an oil slick on the water extending toward the area of poor weather. He made an unscheduled landing on a beach to let out his passengers then searched the area near the oil slick. He said that the visibility was low but usable and that he saw debris and people in the water. He used his radio to direct U.S. Navy aircraft into the area.

[ The Safety Board's full brief is available at <http://ntsb.gov/Publictn/publictn.htm>. The Aviation Accident Brief number is NTSB/AAB-07/01. ]

Updated on Nov 17 2009 5:09PM

 <b>National Transportation Safety Board</b> <b>FACTUAL REPORT</b> <b>AVIATION</b>		NTSB ID: SEA05MA199			
		Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005			
		Occurrence Type: Accident			
<b>Landing Facility/Approach Information</b>					
Airport Name	Airport ID:	Airport Elevation Ft. MSL	Runway Used N/A	Runway Length	Runway Width
Runway Surface Type:					
Runway Surface Condition:					
Approach/Arrival Flown: NONE					
VFR Approach/Landing: None					
<b>Aircraft Information</b>					
Aircraft Manufacturer AEROSPATIALE		Model/Series AS350BA		Serial Number 2053	
Airworthiness Certificate(s): Normal					
Landing Gear Type: Skid					
Amateur Built Acft? No	Number of Seats: 7	Certified Max Gross Wt. 4258 LBS		Number of Engines: 1	
Engine Type: Turbo Shaft	Engine Manufacturer: Turbomeca		Model/Series: Ariel 1B	Rated Power: 641 HP	
<b>- Aircraft Inspection Information</b>					
Type of Last Inspection 100 Hour	Date of Last Inspection 09/2005	Time Since Last Inspection 39 Hours		Airframe Total Time 11483 Hours	
<b>- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Information</b>					
ELT Installed?/Type Yes /		ELT Operated? No	ELT Aided in Locating Accident Site? No		
<b>Owner/Operator Information</b>					
Registered Aircraft Owner  Jan Leasing LLC		Street Address 275 E. Tropicana Ave			
		City Las Vegas	State NV	Zip Code 89109	
Operator of Aircraft  Heli USA		Street Address			
		City Las Vegas	State NV	Zip Code 89109	
Operator Does Business As:			Operator Designator Code: S9HA		
<b>- Type of U.S. Certificate(s) Held:</b>					
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s): On-demand Air Taxi					
Operating Certificate:			Operator Certificate:		
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter					
Type of Flight Operation Conducted: Non-scheduled; Domestic; Passenger Only					
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION</span> <span>Page 2</span> </div>					

 <b>National Transportation Safety Board</b> <b>FACTUAL REPORT</b> <b>AVIATION</b>		NTSB ID: SEA05MA199			
		Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005			
		Occurrence Type: Accident			
<b>First Pilot Information</b>					
Name		City		State	Date of Birth
On File		On File		On File	Age
					43
Sex: M	Seat Occupied: Right	Occupational Pilot? Yes		Certificate Number: On File	
Certificate(s): Commercial					
Airplane Rating(s): Single-engine Land					
Rotorcraft/Glider/LTA: Helicopter					
Instrument Rating(s): None					
Instructor Rating(s): None					
Current Biennial Flight Review? 08/2005					
Medical Cert.: Class 2		Medical Cert. Status:		Date of Last Medical Exam: 10/2004	
- Flight Time Matrix	All A/C	This Make and Model	Airplane Single Engine	Airplane Multi-Engine	Night
Total Time	2814	334			940
Pilot In Command(PIC)					
Instructor					
Instruction Received					
Last 90 Days	176	176			
Last 30 Days	115	115			
Last 24 Hours	6	6			
Seatbelt Used? Yes		Shoulder Harness Used? Yes		Toxicology Performed? No	
				Second Pilot? No	
<b>Flight Plan/Itinerary</b>					
Type of Flight Plan Filed: Company VFR					
Departure Point	State			Airport Identifier	Departure Time
Lihue	HI			LIH	1354
Destination	State			Airport Identifier	Time Zone
Local Flight					HDT
Type of Clearance: None					
Type of Airspace:					
<b>Weather Information</b>					
Source of Wx Information:					
Company					

 <b>National Transportation Safety Board</b> <b>FACTUAL REPORT</b> <b>AVIATION</b>		NTSB ID: SEA05MA199			
		Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005			
		Occurrence Type: Accident			


<b>Weather Information</b>					
WOF ID	Observation Time	Time Zone	WOF Elevation	WOF Distance From Accident Site	Direction From Accident Site
LIH	1354	HST	153 Ft. MSL	20 NM	113 Deg. Mag.
Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition: Few			2400 Ft. AGL	Condition of Light: Day	
Lowest Ceiling:			Ft. AGL	Visibility: 10 SM	Altimeter: 29.86 "Hg
Temperature: 29 °C		Dew Point: 23 °C	Weather Conditions at Accident Site: Instrument Conditions		
Wind Direction: 90		Wind Speed: 9		Wind Gusts:	
Visibility (RVR): Ft.		Visibility (RVV) SM			
Precip and/or Obscuration: Heavy - Thunderstorms - Rain					

<b>Accident Information</b>					
Aircraft Damage: Substantial		Aircraft Fire: None		Aircraft Explosion: None	

- Injury Summary Matrix	Fatal	Serious	Minor	None	TOTAL	
First Pilot			1		1	
Second Pilot						
Student Pilot						
Flight Instructor						
Check Pilot						
Flight Engineer						
Cabin Attendants						
Other Crew						
Passengers	3		2		5	
- TOTAL ABOARD -	3		3		6	
Other Ground						
- GRAND TOTAL -	3		3		6	

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FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION						Page 4
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 <p>National Transportation Safety Board</p> <p><b>FACTUAL REPORT</b></p> <p><b>AVIATION</b></p>	NTSB ID: SEA05MA199	
	Occurrence Date: 09/23/2005	
	Occurrence Type: Accident	
<b>Administrative Information</b>		
Investigator-In-Charge (IIC) Debra J. Eckrote		
Additional Persons Participating in This Accident/Incident Investigation:  David S Ryan FAA/FSDO Honolulu, HI  Zoe Keliher NTSB SWR-A Gardena, CA  Nicole Charnon NTSB SWR-A Honolulu, HI  Joe Syslo American Eurocopter Grand Prairie, TX  John C Waugh Heli USA Las Vegas, NV  David A Lok Heli USA Las Vegas, NV  Lindsay Cunningham American Eurocopter Grand Prairie, TX		
<div>FACTUAL REPORT - AVIATION</div> <div>Page 5</div>		